

May 17, 1956

Dr. Roger S. Mitchell
Webb Building
University of Colorado Medical Center
Denver 20, Colorado

Dear Roger:

Your note was received. No, I don't think I will be in New York next week. I have to stay home once in awhile and try to snatch bits of research between meetings.

The study of antibiotic inhibition of enzyme synthesis is definitely under way although there have been some delays. Dexter Goldman has acquired a graduate student by the name of Pat Conlon who will work on this project fairly intensively after July 1. She will divide her time between the laboratory at the VA hospital and the Department of Bacteriology. So I expect there will be some action on this story, although it may not move as rapidly as one might hope. If nothing else there is at least some hope that these studies may give us further information on the physiology of drug action.

I would like to ask you what your standing is with regard to the problem of individual variation in the metabolism of isoniazid. Do you have a program under way which contemplates the inclusion of family or pedigree data? I certainly hope so. However if you should ultimately feel that this is beyond the scope of your own interest there is a vague possibility that we might be able to carry on some of the genetic angles here provided the chemical procedures prove not to be too complicated. A program in medical genetics is finally being set up at Wisconsin with the pending appointment this summer of Dr. Newton Morton who will be an assistant professor of "anatomy and human genetics". The anatomy affiliation is I hope one of hospitality rather than obligation fit in with the traditional program in that area and I have every hope that we are going to have some serious developments in this field at Wisconsin although this is only a beginning. The last thing I have in my mind, Roger, is to distract you from the possibility of continuing with this kind of metabolic genetic study. I am only indicating that if there were no other way to push forward with that particular problem that it might be possible to do something about it here. Before this can be considered in much more detail we ought to have more information on what is already known of this individual variation and the only thing I have been able to find so far has been a few not very revealing abstracts in the Chemotherapy Proceedings.

We have no present plans about coming out to Denver although we hope it will not be too long before we visit you and Larry again.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics

JL/mv